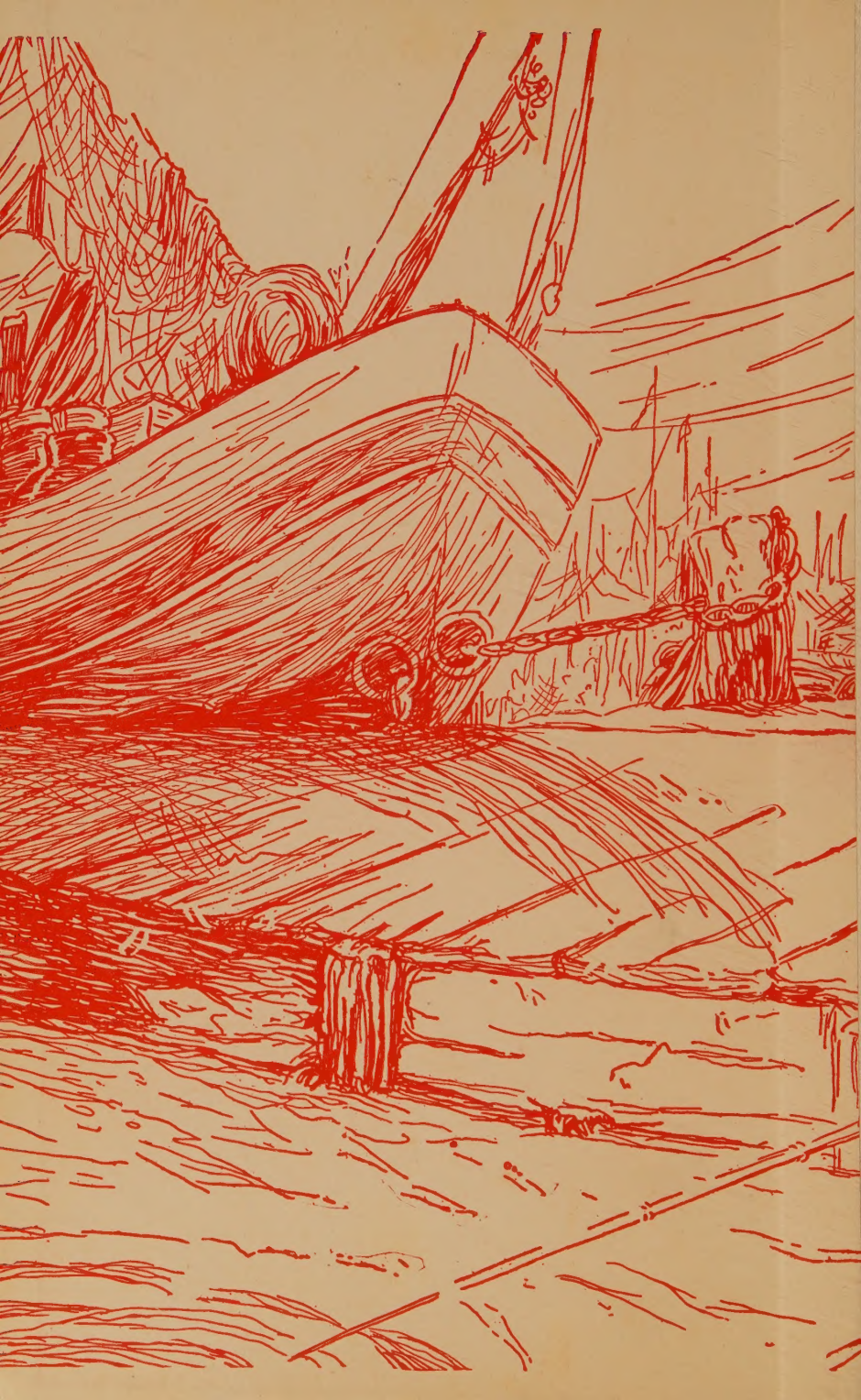
The Little Dutch Tulip Girl

by

Madeline Brandeis



To Kay Both $2.00 NK
From KG 39
Mother + Daddy C/O
Dec 30, 1942
Age 8.
Rena H Daley

LACY-CAPPED, WOODEN-SHOED TRYNTJE! THE LITTLE DUTCH TULIP GIRL

The LITTLE DUTCH TULIP GIRL

BY
MADELINE BRANDEIS
Producer of the Motion Pictures
"The Little Indian Weaver"
"The Wee Scotch Piper"
"The Little Dutch Tulip Girl"
"The Little Swiss Wood-Carver"

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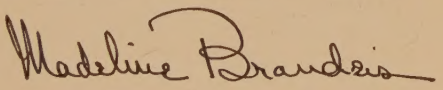
PREFACE

When I began to write these stories about children of all lands I had just returned from Europe whither I journeyed with Marie and Ref. Maybe you don't know Marie and Ref. I'll introduce them: Please meet Marie, my very little daughter, and Ref, my very big reflex camera.

These two are my helpers. Marie helps by being a little girl who knows what other little girls like and by telling me; and Ref helps by snapping pictures of everything interesting that Marie and I see on our travels. I couldn't get along without them.

Several years have gone by since we started our work together and Marie is a bigger girl—but Ref hasn't changed one bit. Ref hasn't changed any more than my interest in writing these books for you. And I hope that *you* hope that I'll never change, because I want to keep on writing until we'll have no more countries to write about—unless, of course, some one discovers a new country.

Even if a new country isn't discovered, we'll find foreign children to talk about—maybe the children in Mars! Who knows? Nobody. Not even Marie—and Marie usually knows about most things. That's the reason why, you see, though I sign myself



I am really only

Marie's Mother.

To every child of every land,
Little sister, little brother,
As in this book your lives unfold,
May you learn to love each other.

CONTENTS

	Page
Chapter I	
Tulips	11
Chapter II	
Tryntje	16
Chapter III	
The Message of the Tulip	35
Chapter IV	
Tom Arrives	41
Chapter V	
The First Adventure	57
Chapter VI	
More Adventures	76
Chapter VII	
The City of Storks	100
Chapter VIII	
A Strange Ride	107
Chapter IX	
Troubles in Tree Town	127
Chapter X	
Volendam Again	150
Chapter XI	
Where is Jan?	158
Chapter XII	
Tryntje Takes Flight	169
Chapter XIII	
A Birthday Surprise	180

TOM SHOWED TRYNTJE HIS STORY BOOK

The Little Dutch Tulip Girl

CHAPTER I

TULIPS

Tom loved tulips. He was never happier than when planting bulbs in his garden. While he planted he thought of the place whence came those little, brown, potato-like bulbs.

Some day, after they had been carefully watered, and caressed by the sun, they would push through the earth. They would be glorious, many-colored tulips.

They would be yellow, lavender, pink, and red. They would wave in a tiny, wafting breeze, which made them nod to Tom.

It made them say, in flower language, "Good day, little boy. We thank you. You have raised us tenderly, tenderly. We thank you, little boy."

Tom loved them—every one of them. His little, brown hands planted their little, brown-skinned souls in the earth.

Later, when the graceful flowers wilted on their stems and it was the season to dig up the bulbs again, he found that each had "laid an egg." For you know, bulbs multiply.

When they were dug up, Tom always found that each one had a little mate. This meant added bulbs to plant next year.

Tom's father always smiled and said,

TOM

"Soon we shall have a small Holland in our garden, with Tom's tulip fields growing as they do each year!"

Each time Father mentioned Holland, Tom felt something tickle inside of him. It was something pleasant—something longing. Why did he think so often of Holland—of that far-away little country?

Those saucy Dutch tulip bulbs had traveled so far, thought Tom. But he, a boy, had never been outside his own state in America. He had hardly been outside of his own garden.

Nevertheless, in that garden, Tom learned a great deal about the world. For he often sat under his favorite tree with a book of travel in his hands

and roamed the sea, the land, the air. No place was too far for Tom.

"I shall be a captain some day!" he said to himself. "I shall steer my ship to Asia! I shall go to—"

"To Holland!" laughed and nodded the tulips.

"Yes, to Holland! I shall some day go to Holland!" he promised himself.

CHAPTER II

TRYNTJE

One day Katrina Schulder was very, very lonely. Katrina was never called Katrina, so I think we had better call her the name by which she was known.

That name was Tryntje. This name is as common in Holland as Betty is in your country.

Tryntje (which is pronounced "Trincha") was a little Volendam girl, eight years old.

Volendam is a wee town in Holland. Holland is a wee country. And Tryntje was a wee girl!

So altogether everything was wee—

TRYNTJE SAT ON HER HEELS

everything but Tryntje's loneliness! That was very great. Her eyes were nearly blinded with the tears that just would brim up.

She sat on her heels, as she always sat. Volendam girls never really sit

down, for fear of spoiling their neat skirts. Meanwhile, she watched the other children in the village at their play.

It might have seemed odd to any but a Dutch child to watch Volendam children at play. For they did not look like children at all.

Except for their size, one would have believed them men and women who had suddenly become playful. For these children dressed exactly as did their elders.

The little girls, from the tiniest tot to the tallest maiden, wore long, full skirts and aprons. The boys wore full, baggy trousers, vivid red blouses, shiny buttons, and round black caps.

All wore the wooden shoes, or klompen, as they are called. And the sound made by these shoes went, "Klompity, klompity, klomp!" That, no doubt, is why they were called klompen.

Tryntje wore a little tight, black cap upon her head. The cap covered her hair. No one ever saw her hair except her mother at night when she tucked Tryntje into bed.

All Dutch girls wear this black, tight cap with the funny peak. It makes them look like queer little gnomes.

You will ask, "But where are the dainty, fairy-winged caps which we see on all the picture post-cards and in all the Dutch story books?"

They are being carefully washed and

ironed for the next day. It is now a week-day afternoon. Volendam misses become "fairies" only when they go to school or on Sundays. At other times, they are just "gnomes."

Tryntje was such a sad little gnome to-day. Her brothers were all playing on the street. They were playing a fine game with a ball, which they kicked with their klompen.

Tryntje had five brothers. She sometimes played with them, but to-day she could not play.

"What is the matter, Tryntje?" asked one of her brothers, as he came up behind her and softly put his hand on her shoulder. "You are crying."

"I am lonely," was the answer.

WHEN TRYNTJE'S BROTHERS GROW UP, THIS IS THE WAY THEY WILL LOOK

A sob came from Tryntje, and the flood of tears broke loose.

"You must not cry for Jan," said her little brother. "He would not like it. He is very happy. He told you to be happy, too, you know."

Tryntje wiped away tears which had trickled down her little pink cheeks.

"I shall stop now, Willem," she said bravely. "I shall not cry any more."

But the smile which she offered was not very hearty. Willem knelt down beside her and kissed her.

"You will talk with me, Tryntje, now that Jan is gone," he said.

Tryntje did not answer, but she squeezed her little brother's hand very tightly. She had been thinking so hard all day about Jan, her big man-brother.

He had been her greatest friend and companion. He had told her tales of other lands. He had told her of ships and gardens and little foreign chil-

dren. He had also told her of men and women who did strange foreign things in far-away countries.

Jan was more than twice Tryntje's age, but they loved each other dearly. Every day after school, Tryntje used to rush home to Jan when he was there.

Sometimes he would be away on the fishing boat with Father. He would often walk with her along the dike and tell her about Holland's history.

He knew so much—her Jan! He was forever reading. He did not like the fishing boats. He was always longing to go away from Volendam and see the world.

"Ah, Tryntje," he used to say, "from Rotterdam and the big ports go many

JAN WOULD OFTEN WALK WITH TRYNTJE ALONG THE DIKE

ships each day! They go to the lands far away—to India and China and America. I shall be on one some day, my little sister. But I shall not forget my Tryntje. I shall, one day, come back to get you, little Tryntje."

So had Jan spoken so often, so dreamily, that Tryntje could not believe that he had really gone. He had really sailed a week ago on a big steamer from Rotterdam — a big ship bound for mysterious America.

With glowing face and city clothes and real leather shoes, Jan had sailed away. And Tryntje had stood on the pier with her little family and waved and waved and waved.

Then the sea had seemed mixed with her tears and her tears with the sea. Finally the two had swam together, and Tryntje had turned away.

That had been a very exciting day for the five little brothers of Tryntje. They had played about the docks all

morning. They had eaten the fine salt herring sold there by a vendor.

They had not minded Jan's leaving. They thought it was splendid. They had been proud to have a brother in city clothes going to America.

And Father had seemed proud, too. But Mother's handkerchief had come out and dabbed at her eyes.

On the docks, men had been working, piling boxes on top of each other—big, wooden boxes.

"What does Holland send away to foreign countries?" thought Tryntje.

The first pain of her brother's departure had softened a bit in her heart. Now her childish curiosity began to awaken.

"What could my little country give to the big world?" wondered the Dutch girl.

She sat alone on the pier. She watched her scampering brothers. Their curious faces were peering into this and that, as they dashed about.

She arose and walked slowly toward a large crate made of wooden slats. On the top she saw writing. The box was going to "U. S. A." That meant America!

That was where Jan was going. It was the same place! Poor little Tryntje! Had she guessed what those initials stood for—U. S. A.! To her it meant a place where soon her beloved brother would be.

The vastness of the United States was unknown to this little Volendam girl. If she had been told, she could not have believed that all of Holland could be put into a small corner of the great United States. Then it would have been lost there on the prairies!

Tryntje examined the big box carefully and peeped inside the slats. She saw heavy, brown paper bags. She slowly poked her finger inside.

The bags were lumpy. What could it be? What were these things going from her Holland to that land where Jan had gone? What could they be?

Without realizing what she had been doing, Tryntje had poked a hole in the paper. Her hand shot out and her

head up. What if some one had seen? But no. There was nobody about. She stood alone with the strange crate. Now the hole was in the bag. What harm would it be to peep in?

Again her little finger stole through the hole. She felt something soft and round. Looking into the bag, she could see its contents. Bulbs!

So that was what Holland shipped to America. Jan had spoken about the millions of Dutch bulbs sent overseas. Jan had liked to talk about bulbs and gardens.

In Volendam there were no tulip fields. Jan had longed to work in tulip fields.

Once he had gone to Lisse. It is a

town of tulips and other flowers and the raising of bulbs. There he had worked for a gardener.

But Father had needed him, so he had come back. And Tryntje had been sorry for him, but glad for herself.

So these were some of the tulip bulbs waiting to be shipped to America. Just then, Tryntje had a funny thought. She wanted to change places with the bulbs and be shipped to America to Jan.

"But they wouldn't want a little girl," she mused. "They only want useful things in the foreign countries, Jan said."

A man came along. He was marking the crates. As he came upon Tryntje

BULBS BEING SHIPPED DOWN CANAL TO SEA

standing alone by the crate, he stopped and smiled.

"Those are bulbs, sister," he told her. "Many are going off to America to-day on a ship. Would you like to have one to plant in your garden?"

"Yes, thank you," answered Tryntje.

The man put his hand between the slats. Tryntje was afraid he might find the tiny hole she had made.

But he seemed to know just how to find the top of the paper bag. Opening it, he brought forth a round bulb and gave it to Tryntje. It was nicely covered with thin brown skin.

"That will make a fine tulip for you, sister," he said.

And with his pencil, he went on about his work. Tryntje sat on her heels. She held the tulip bulb in her two hands carefully, tightly. She had a plan.

Nearby was a small piece of brown paper. She snatched it up quickly and started to wrap the tulip bulb.

Now if she could only have a pencil with which to write on the paper! The man was coming back again. Dare she ask him?

"What is it, little one?" he asked.

He stooped and laid his hand on her cap.

"I wish to write a little letter, sir," she said, looking up at him earnestly. "I wish to put the little letter around the tulip bulb and send it to America."

The astonished man scratched his head, as he replied, "That is a strange way to send a letter."

But he gave Tryntje his pencil and stood over her, smiling. The little girl sat with the pencil poised. A deep frown gathered on her brow.

"Why do you not write your letter?" asked the man.

Tryntje sighed. "I forgot. In America they speak English," she said. "I cannot write English."

Tryntje had studied English in school as all Dutch children do. But she had not yet learned enough to write in that language.

"Then tell me what you wish to say, and I will help you," said the man.

That was how Katrina Schulder sent a message to America. And that was what she was thinking about on this lovely day, when all the other children in Volendam were playing. That was why a sad little tear trickled down her pink cheek.

CHAPTER III

THE MESSAGE OF THE TULIP

It was bulb time here in America.

"Hurrah for Holland!" shouted Tom, as he staggered into the garden with a big wooden box in his arms.

Two little figures followed Tom—a little boy and a little girl. They were his brother and sister, two young rascals. They were babies to Tom, who considered himself a man beside them.

"What's in the box, Tom?" asked his brother.

"I know! I know!" shrieked the baby sister. "Goo-lips—goo-lips!"

"No, Josie, not 'goo.' 'Tu'—tulips!"

explained Tom. "These are new Dutch bulbs just over from Holland. Daddy's friend sent them. Wasn't that nice of him? Now in a few months we'll see a big, big field all covered with flowers. I'm going to plant them to-day."

Josie and John were only babies.

"Is a few months soon?" asked John.

"Oh, not soon," replied Tom. "Long after Santa Claus has come and gone."

"Oh, dear! Why can't they come right now?" asked John impatiently. "That's too long to wait. Come on, Josie. Let's dig worms!"

And off they ran. Tom was a little glad to be alone. He had two very important things to do to-day.

One was to plant the new bulbs. The

"WHAT'S THIS? TULIP BULBS ARE NEVER WRAPPED IN PAPER!"

other was to look into a book sent from the same Dutch friend—a book of Dutch tales. Singing to himself, Tom opened the box of bulbs. Such beauties! Big and fat—almost bursting their skins! They fairly asked to be

planted and to burst into bloom.

Such beauties! Out they came. Tom's hands tenderly lifted each one and gently placed them upon the ground.

"What's this?" he asked himself.

His hand made a crinkling sound with stiff paper inside the box. Tulip bulbs are never wrapped in paper! Why was this one wrapped in paper?

Tom pulled it out and opened the paper. Inside was a lovely, fat bulb! Upon its paper wrapping were some words. How strange! It was a letter!

The boy read: "I am a lonely little Dutch girl in Volendam. Please who reads this letter write to me.

Katrina Schulder."

It was the message of a tulip.

TOM OPENED THE BOOK AND BEGAN TO READ

Tom straightened the stiff, brown paper and reread the letter. Katrina! In the Dutch book lying by his side he had seen a picture of a Volendam girl. Under the picture, it said: "Katrina of Holland."

He opened the book. Yes. This Katrina who wrote the message must look just like the picture-book Katrina! See those pretty, white wings on her cap and the dear little face peering through.

How lonely she looked! Maybe he could find out why she was lonely if he read the book. It would be so much nicer to go to her. He could write to her, of course.

But oh, how he would love to cross the ocean and see her in her own little country! The book was so handy, though, and Holland so far away!

Tom opened the book and began to read.

CHAPTER IV

TOM ARRIVES

Tryntje was sitting on her heels near her five little brothers. They were fishing in the canal. Tryntje was knitting a stocking.

Five pairs of wooden shoes hung over the side of the bank. They touched the water, swung, and kicked.

Tryntje's wooden shoes were hidden underneath her long, puffy skirts as she squatted and knitted. She wore her white-winged cap.

It was thus that the boy from America found her. He came along the narrow Volendam street. His Holland

TRYNTJE SAT ON HER HEELS BESIDE HER FIVE LITTLE BROTHERS

book was tucked under his arm. The bulb with its message was clasped tightly in his hand.

Tom was really and truly in Holland. He had come on a ship to Holland! He had really and truly come!

He pinched himself. Yes; this was Volendam, just as he had pictured it. He saw the tiny, "gingerbready" houses with peaked roofs, the knitting women and girls in doorways.

Men and boys in wide trousers were klomping along to the tune of their wooden shoes. Canals were on one side of all the streets, with little, rickety bridges here and there.

Everything looked rickety. Everything looked like picture-book land! Again Tom pinched himself. Rickety-rackety! Everything so clean but crooked!

Here came some maidens, lacy-capped, arm in arm. They were laughing and talking. Not a word could the

little boy from America understand.

A sight ahead made him stop. There was Katrina! How he knew Katrina was a puzzle to Tom, but he knew her as well as he knew his name.

Though all the little girls were dressed alike, there could be but one Katrina, the little Dutch tulip girl!

And here she was sitting and knitting. Five boys in black suits were playing around her. With her white cap, she stood out from those five dark little figures.

Tom opened the book and glanced at the picture of "Katrina of Holland." Then he glanced at the real Katrina. Yes, the same!

She looked up then and saw him. She

"GINGERBREADY" VOLENDAM!

smiled. He closed his book and came up to her. She ran to meet him, her wooden shoes clacking along. Her smile was wide. The corners of her rosy mouth went up just like the corners of her cap. He liked her smile.

She put out her hand and said, "How do you do, little boy from America?"

Tom said, "How do you do, little Dutch Katrina? The tulip bulb brought your message."

Tom showed her the bulb and the paper wrapping with her own handwriting on it. She seemed surprised.

"So you came all the way from America to see me?" she asked, her eyes widening.

"Yes," laughed Tom. "I came with my father's friend. It was he who sent me the bulbs and the book. He brought me across on his ship. He is a sea captain!"

"O-oh!" said Katrina.

Five black figures had gathered

LACY-CAPPED, WOODEN-SHOED TRYNTJE! THE LITTLE DUTCH TULIP GIRL

about Tom. Now Tryntje introduced her brothers to her new friend. They were all pleased with Tom.

They thought his little short trousers and bare legs as funny as he thought their baggy trousers and heavy wooden shoes. They became friends at once.

Tryntje took Tom by the arm and said, "Come to my house. You shall see my mother and have some tea."

The little procession made its way toward the Schulder house. Many curious heads came popping out of windows.

From around each corner peered little faces watching Tryntje and Tom. All the while, they walked along together, followed by the five brothers.

"HOW DO YOU DO, LITTLE DUTCH KATRINA!"

"Oh, Father is home!" squealed Tryntje.

They were then drawing near the door of her funny little brick house with a peaked roof. It was sandwiched in between two other funny brick houses with peaked roofs.

"How do you know?" asked Tom, looking about and seeing nobody.

"I know," said Tryntje, "because I see his wooden shoes at the door!"

There were two large wooden shoes, neatly laid outside the door. Beside them was another pair, not so large—Mother's, no doubt.

"Come, let us go in," said Tryntje.

The Schulder children all started to take off their shoes. Added to the four

already at the door were twelve more wooden shoes. One could hardly get by to pass through the door!

All Volendam folk take off their shoes before entering the house. They walk around inside the house with stocking feet.

They wear warm, hand-knit stockings on their feet.

Tom looked at the mass of klompen. Then he put his own little sandaled foot inside one of Father Schulder's big ones. This made all the little Schulders laugh.

In they trooped. Mother and Father were there. Mother sat on the floor. She squatted really, the way Tryntje always did. Father did the same, his

TOM PUT HIS SANDALED FOOT INSIDE THE BIG KLOMPEN

long knees drawn up and his hands clasped around them.

While they squatted they chatted together. They had much to say, for Father had been away on the seas fishing. He had just returned.

Tryntje and the five brothers ran to Father and threw their arms about his neck. He kissed them all. Then he took Tryntje on his knees and fondled her.

Tom could not understand what they said, but soon Tryntje introduced him. Mother and Father both asked him to sit down. They brought him a chair. But all the others stood or squatted.

Tom looked around the little Dutch room. It was the first he had ever seen out of picture-book land. It might have

been a page torn out of a book. It was so clean that even the walls shone.

All around were little statues and pictures. They were mostly religious pictures and statues. A tiny candle burned on a shelf.

On the floor was glistening oilcloth, and on a table was a shiny copper tea-set. They asked Tom to have some tea. They were very polite and kind.

They all had tea, but the children always stood up. Wouldn't it be queer if you always had to stand up at meal-time while your parents sat at table?

That is what Volendam children have to do. They never sit down in the house. It is not polite.

Tom noticed how plain the room was.

TOM MEETS TRYNTJE'S MOTHER

There was nothing about but the table and the pictures on the wall. It was all very plain and neat.

There was never any dirt from shoes. Stockings always padded about that room.

Tom lifted his sandals up a little from the floor.

"Would you like to see where I sleep?" asked Tryntje.

Tom was curious about this. He had heard about those closet beds used by Dutch people.

Tryntje walked over to the side of that plain, shiny, little room and pulled open a door in the wall. Then Tom's astonishment was great. For he saw a real Dutch bed—a hole cut right into the wall.

But it looked snug and cozy with its billowy quilt and soft, white pillows. Tom thought it must be very nice to sleep in a closet.

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST ADVENTURE

Tom and Tryntje sat on the dike and fished. All the ships were near them. The ships had deep red sails and spidery masts, and fishermen in baggy trousers walking about the decks.

Tom and Tryntje fished. Tom was still thinking of all he had seen since he had arrived in Volendam.

He had been to school with Tryntje. He had seen all the little girls sitting in the schoolroom with their white-winged caps on. They certainly looked quaint.

Outside the schoolroom Tom had

seen dozens of little cubby-holes with wooden shoes inside them. The pupils had left their shoes outside and had worn their hats in. How funny!

After school Tom had gone to see Tryntje's father on his ship. Tom had hoisted the sail himself. Tryntje's father had let him do it alone.

He and Tryntje had delivered the milk with a dogcart. The dog had pulled the cart, and Tom had driven. Tryntje had sat on the cart with the milk.

A policeman had stopped them and had measured the dog to see if he was big enough to haul the cart. Dogs must be of a certain size to pull carts in Holland. It is a good thing.

THEY SAT ON THE DIKE AND FISHED

This dog was big enough. So they had continued their work.

On the way, Tryntje had pointed out such amusing sights.

A little girl had sailed her doll in her shoe on the canal. Another had been washing her doll's clothes in the canal. The canal is very fine for children.

Now Tom sat beside Tryntje on the dike and fished. He showed her the story book he had brought along. He asked her why she looked so sad in the picture.

Then Tryntje looked really sad as she said, "I was so lonely for my big brother. He sailed away. He used to tell me stories about Holland when he was here."

TOGETHER THEY DELIVERED THE MILK

Tom said, "Now I am here, and we can be friends, so you must not be lonely. But I cannot tell you stories. I do not know any stories about Holland. But won't you tell me what your brother Jan told you about Holland?"

Tryntje did not answer for a moment. Tom thought a strange look had come into her face—a fairy-like look. It startled him just a little.

Then she said, "Why must I tell? Why can't you and I go to those places together?"

Tom thought she must be joking, and he only laughed in reply. But Tryntje remained serious.

"Yes. Let us go there and see the places in Holland together. Wouldn't you like that?" she asked.

"Why, yes, of course. I'd love that," replied Tom. "But we couldn't, Tryntje. We are too small to go alone, you know."

Again a queer look came over

TOM SHOWED TRYNTJE HIS STORY BOOK

Tryntje's face. Without speaking, but only smiling a little, she took off her lacy, white-winged cap. It left her with the black, peaked, gnome cap.

Tom thought that she looked too elfin to be real. He began to be a little bit afraid. But Tryntje looked at him with big serious eyes. She held her winged cap in her hands.

She said softly, "We will now play doing things just the same as they do in a fairy story. See what will happen! Watch!"

Slowly, slowly, as Tom watched, the white-winged cap grew. It grew bigger—bigger, until it was as large as a small ship.

It stayed in the air, right over

Tryntje's hands. They were too little now to hold it.

"Now, come, Tom. Do not be afraid. Step into our airship, and we shall go through Holland together!" she cried.

The two children pulled themselves up and into the winged cap, which made a fine lacy airship.

When they had settled themselves inside, the two wings began to flap lazily. The wings flapped slowly, like the wings of big sea gulls. And off through the clouds sailed Tom and Tryntje.

"That is Amsterdam below us!" cried Tryntje.

She pointed. Tom looked down and saw a city divided into small pieces by

water. Many, many canals and bridges separated the land.

Tom could not help remarking, "What a watery city it is! I thought Venice was the city where they had all the canals. But Amsterdam seems to be just the same."

"Yes, and look below at the boats!" called Tryntje. "So many!"

"On the street cars are letter boxes. What a funny place!" exclaimed Tom.

"No; a good place," said Tryntje. "People mail their letters there, and the car takes them quickly to the post office. A big diamond works is here in Amsterdam. It is in the Ghetto. Jan told me that it is the most famous in the world."

A BAGGY-TROUSERED FISHERMAN

On, on flew the lace airship. Soon the two children became accustomed to its rolling, waving motion.

"I'm so hungry!" said Tom.

Tryntje smiled and pulled from the pocket of her skirt a little box.

"I thought we'd be wanting these. Here!" she said.

And Tom put his hand inside the box and pulled out a little square candy, wrapped in paper.

"These are Dutch candies—hopjes!" she told him.

"O-oh, how good! They are made with coffee!" he cried.

They ate many hopjes.

They were now flying over a dear little cuddling village. It cuddled

neatly between the waterways and looked clean.

"That is Broek in Waterland," said Tryntje. "It is called the cleanest village in Holland. Once upon a time, the people were so clean that they didn't allow strangers to walk on the streets with shoes on."

Tom was looking down, and suddenly he pointed.

"What's that? See! There is a crowd gathering below us. They are pointing up to us and talking loudly. They seem angry! Oh, what is the matter?"

Tryntje put her head over the side of the ship and listened. The lace ship had stopped. Tryntje turned to Tom. Her face was serious.

"They say that we threw papers from our candy down upon their streets. They are very angry. They want to shoot us!" she exclaimed.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Why doesn't the ship go? Can't we fly away?" asked Tom, almost crying.

Tryntje looked like a frightened brownie.

"No; the ship has stopped. I can't make it go. What shall we do?" she wailed.

Pop! Pop!

"They are shooting! Oh, dear!" cried both children.

Tom hid his face, and Tryntje crawled down and lay on the floor. They could see that holes were appear-

ing in the wings of their airship. The bullets were hitting the lacy wings.

They would surely drop. Yes, slowly, slowly, down, down went the airship, and then faster, faster. It seemed to spin through the air. Tom began to scream.

Flop! Splash! It dived into the water!

Tom kicked hard and tried to swim. They were in the canal. Where was Tryntje?

Tom waved his arms and threw the water about. Ugh! It was cold! His hand struck something. Earth!

"Wake up, wake up, sleepy! Sleepy!" cried gay voices.

Tom sat up and saw that he was in

JOSIE AND JOHN WERE DOUSING HIM

his own garden. The garden hose was playing upon him furiously.

At the other end were his brother and sister. They were laughing and dousing him with water. They thought it rare sport!

"Ho, ho! Sleeping, you sleepyhead! Wake up!" they shouted.

"Stop! Stop!" cried Tom, sputtering, the water hitting his eyes, his ears, his whole body. "Stop it! I'm awake! Bad John! Bad Josie!"

The flood stopped. The two rascals came over to Tom. Josie knelt beside him.

"Poor Tom! Bad John! Bad Josie!" she said, trying to wipe his face with her little apron.

"Oh, what a splendid dream!" sighed Tom.

And opening the book which had been kicked aside, he looked once more at the picture of his little friend Tryntje.

"HO, HO! SLEEPY-HEAD! WAKE UP!"

"I'm going back there," he said, half aloud and half to himself. "I mustn't leave Tryntje in the water! I must go back and help her. And we haven't finished our trip. The trip must be finished!"

"What did you say?" asked Little Brother John.

"Oh, I was thinking about a girl I know in Holland," replied Tom.

"Aw, you never went to Holland," scoffed John.

"I did," answered Tom, "and I can show you a letter from the little girl I know."

He showed the children the message of the tulip, and the picture of "Katrina of Holland." They looked at him, wide-eyed.

"You see, I really know her," Tom said. "And I must answer her letter right away."

CHAPTER VI
MORE ADVENTURES

Tom wrote to Katrina Schulder in Volendam. He asked her why she was lonely.

He wanted to visit the many towns and villages and waterways of her country.

He felt that their journey had just begun. Surely she was waiting for him to continue it with her.

But Tom was a busy boy. His school work left little time for day dreaming.

But one Saturday afternoon, it was very quiet in the garden. The sunshine made everyone a little lazy. On this

afternoon Tom went to his tree and sat down with his book of Dutch tales.

The field of tulip bulbs was before him. Each bulb had been neatly planted. The one which had come with Tryntje's message was given a bed by itself.

It was in a little plot with a string tied around to fence it off. It was in front of Tom, near the tree.

He could look at it when he sat there to read. He could think of the one who had sent it.

He sat down to-day and hoped to dream. He had even brought Tryntje's message, which he always kept securely locked in his desk drawer.

He had received no answer from her yet. But each day he met the postman at the gate. He did this because of his longing to hear from the little Dutch girl.

To-day was fine for a dream. Tom leaned his head on his hand and stretched out. He glanced over the pages in the Dutch book.

His eyes roamed to the tulip field, bare and brown. No sleep would come, though he tried ever so hard.

He read a little in his book. It was very curious how spoiled he had become. Before that dream of his, he had enjoyed the story book. Now he longed to go and see things for himself instead of reading about them.

Putting the book aside, he leaned back against the tree. If Tryntje only knew how he wanted to come to her! If she could just see him there, trying to play fairy tale—trying, trying!

He looked at the plot of ground where Tryntje's little tulip bulb was planted. Then he saw what he had not noticed before. A tiny green shoot had started up.

That was strange! The bulb had only just been planted! But there it was—so green! As Tom gazed steadily at it, it pushed higher and higher. Now it was surely the beginning of a flower.

Higher and higher it went. It became fatter and fatter. Then suddenly it burst—pop! Open! A lovely yellow

LEIDEN

tulip was there. It smiled at Tom. Tryntje's smile!

Hello! It was Tryntje. She was half up and half in the ground. No, not the ground; the mud! She was struggling!

Tom jumped up and pulled and

pulled her. She came up through the mud. Her lovely, full skirts were all sticky with mud.

But she smiled in spite of that and said, "If you hadn't come, I should have drowned. Let us run away from here."

They took hands and ran. They were at the edge of the canal, Tom saw. They were near the place where their lace airship had fallen.

"Are the people of Broek still angry because we threw the papers?" asked Tom.

"Yes; I think so," said Tryntje. "It was a great crime, they say. Their city is so clean. It is considered a crime to dirty it. We must run away, or we shall be put into jail."

"Where is our airship?" asked Tom.

He looked at Tryntje's head, upon which was only the black gnome cap.

"It fell into the mud! Oh, my poor little cap! What will my mother say?" And Tryntje began to cry.

They stopped running, and Tom said, "Do not cry, and I will go back and search in the water for it."

Tryntje sat down on the bank of the canal, while Tom marched back in search of his friend's cap. He was a little bit afraid—just a wee bit.

He wished Tryntje didn't want the cap. He would rather flee from this very clean city. But he couldn't see her crying.

He looked and looked. At last he

found the cap. It was soaked with mud. It was a very sorry sight. But he pulled it out and ran back to Tryntje, waving it in the air.

He did not stop to wonder how it had become small again. It was not an airship any more. It was only Tryntje's cap.

"Ho, ho! I found it!" called Tom, waving it so that the mud spattered around.

Just then he heard footsteps behind him. His heart gave a bound. Tryntje came running to meet him.

"Look behind you! They are chasing us with sticks—clean, white sticks. We are soiling their village! Run! Run!" she shouted.

How they ran through the village streets! All the time they were making dirty, muddy footmarks on the shiny streets. People held up their hands in horror. The whole village ran after them.

As they ran, Tryntje kicked one of her wooden shoes high up in front of her. It stayed up a long time.

When it came down it landed on the canal and began to grow big. It became a boat.

"Hurry! Let's get in!" shouted Tryntje.

Together they clambered into the wooden shoe boat. It started to glide along the canal at a great speed.

Soon the village of Broek, with its

SPOT WHENCE THE PILGRIM FATHERS STARTED FOR AMERICA IN 1620

angry people, was left miles behind.

"Oh, dear! What an adventure!" gasped Tom. "I never knew folks could be so clean!"

"They will be scrubbing for a week —every man and woman and child—to

clean up the dirt we made!" laughed Tryntje.

As they sped along, she dipped her cap into the canal.

"What are you doing?" asked Tom.

"I am doing some cleaning, too, you see," answered Tryntje.

She scrubbed and scrubbed her cap until all the mud was gone.

Then she asked, "How shall I iron it?"

She frowned. Tom had an idea.

"Why, with your klompen," he said.

So together they pressed Tryntje's cap with her one klompen, while the other klompen carried them swiftly along.

"See! There is the city of Leiden,"

said Tryntje. "And there is the church built on the spot where Rev. John Robinson, the English pastor, spoke to your own Pilgrim Fathers. He told them to set sail for New England. They did so in 1620."

Swiftly went the wooden shoe boat —too swiftly. Tom would have liked to look longer at this city. It interested him because the Pilgrims of his own land had set sail from it.

"Do you see that neat little house in that field?" asked Tryntje.

"Yes. How pretty it is!" cried Tom.

"It is where they keep the cows in winter," she told him. "It is dainty inside, and has lace curtains at the windows. The walls are decorated

FAMOUS HOLSTEIN CATTLE

with fine pottery. Cows are well cared for here. That is why they give such nice milk."

"Oh, look at all the colors! Is it a fair? Is it a circus?" asked Tom.

Tom stood up and the boat tipped.

"Sit down! Sit down or we shall turn over!" said Tryntje, hanging on to the sides. "No; it is not a circus. It is a field of tulips. It is tulip time, and we are now passing Haarlem. This is where the finest bulbs are grown."

Such a wealth of color Tom had never seen.

It swam before his eyes. It almost made him dizzy.

So these were Dutch tulip fields. How he should have liked to stay and look at those fields for hours and hours!

"The people in the towns around here are all bulb growers. They live on their bulb business. That is all

they do," explained the little Dutch girl.

"What is that large city I see ahead of us?" asked Tom, after they had sailed along quietly for a while.

"Oh, we are now coming to The Hague! That is where the Queen of Holland lives," replied Tryntje.

"And the King, too?"

"Oh, no. We have no King. The Queen's husband is Prince Hendrick, but Queen Wilhelmina reigns," said Tryntje.

As they drew closer, Tom saw that The Hague was different from Amsterdam and the other cities he had seen. It had an air of peace about it.

The people all walked along as

QUEEN WILHELMINA'S PALACE

though they were enjoying the calm of the lovely streets. Trees were everywhere. A forest almost surrounded the city.

Tryntje pointed out a square, white building.

"There is the palace," she said.

"Oh, it does not look like a palace," said Tom, a little disappointed.

"No," answered Tryntje. "It is like our Queen—very simple and modest. That is why the people love her."

They visited the "House in the Wood." It is an old palace built by the Princes of Orange and set among the thick trees.

They were now walking. Tryntje had on her two klompen. But Tom did not ask how that happened.

He was getting used to surprises with Tryntje. He knew, too, all the time, that they were playing fairy tale. So anything might happen.

But Tom little thought what was

THE HOUSE IN THE WOOD

to happen. If he had known, he would not have walked along so gayly.

But now they were very happy together. They were enjoying the fine sights in The Hague.

Tom noticed that Tryntje was the

only person dressed in costume. All the others were in clothes like ours.

"It doesn't seem like Holland at all," he remarked. "I thought that everyone wore wooden shoes and clothes like yours, Tryntje."

"No, no! Mine is worn only in Volendam," she said. "There are other places in Holland where other costumes are worn. But in The Hague and other big cities, the people dress just the way you do in America."

"Yes. I can see that," replied Tom.

They noticed some little mirrors fastened upon the windows of houses.

"Those mirrors are to look out and show people who is at the door," explained Tryntje. "They never open

EVERYONE IN HOLLAND RIDES A BICYCLE

the door until they know who is there."

"See the bicycles!" he cried, as hundreds of people flew by, riding bicycles.

"Is it a race?" asked Tom, stopping to gaze.

"No. It is noon, and everyone is going to lunch. Here at this corner they say that four hundred bicycles a minute pass at noon," she told him.

"I can well believe that," said Tom, as he continued staring at the sight before him.

There were old men, young men—fat and thin, and women with babies in their baskets. There were girls in black bonnets, old ladies, and stiff soldiers in high hats. All were on bicycles.

There were grocery boys and fish peddlers, students, and doctors. Everyone in Holland has a bicycle.

"Ding, ding, ding!" The street was thick with them.

THE PEACE PALACE

"Here we are now, at the Peace Palace," said Tryntje.

Just then they stopped before a stately building set in a glorious flower garden.

"Here is the building to which each

country has given something," she said.

"What did my country give?" asked the young American quickly.

Tryntje smiled and answered, "You will be proud when I tell you that an American, Andrew Carnegie, gave an immense sum of money toward the building. In front are the handsome iron gates given by Germany. Let us go into the gardens. They were given by the Netherlands."

Inside the palace they saw the beautiful marble steps and columns donated by Italy. They saw the fine chandeliers from Austria.

There was a graceful pair of antique vases from China, also a jasper

vase from Russia. They saw a painting from France. The stained glass windows were from England, and the clock in the steeple was from Switzerland.

Many other countries gave many other treasures.

Meetings are held in this palace. Statesmen from every country come here and talk of ways to keep the world peaceful.

It was growing dark. Tryntje suggested that they walk to the woods. There they might sit down and rest and decide what next to do.

While they walked to the woods, Tryntje told Tom a story about "The City of Storks."

CHAPTER VII

THE CITY OF STORKS

Storks have always lived in Holland. They love the little low country, and the people love them.

There is a story about a great fire which started one day in the city of The Hague. Smoke was thick. Many houses were in flames.

The firemen saved the people in all the houses. They thought that they had forgotten nobody.

Suddenly they were greatly disturbed to see some storks circling about a burning house.

The dwelling was flaming, and the

fire would soon reach the roof. Still the storks flew about, frantically flapping their wings.

Firemen climbed to the housetop and found that some baby storks were in their nests on the roof. They saved the little birds, which were too young to fly.

But suppose they had been too late to save the lives of those babies. Then the father and mother stork would surely have died beside their young.

This story is very dear to the people of The Hague. Some say that it was because of this beautiful story of devoted love that the city became known as "The City of the Storks."

"I do not see any storks," said Tom, looking around him. "Where are they? Do they still build nests on the housetops?"

"Yes," answered Tryntje, "but there are not so many as before. Once they were everywhere. They used to sit upon the island in the middle of the city."

"But I saw no island," remarked Tom.

Tryntje laughed.

"No, I forgot. The island is no more. They have filled up one side of the canal and now it is part of the city," she said. "They are always filling up canals here. Sometime we must go to the Zuider Zee and watch what

they are doing there. They are going to fill the whole Zuider Zee. They are going to make a new land out of a sea."

"Oh! I want to see that," said Tom.

Just then it seemed to grow very dark and cold. The woods were black, and Tom began to shiver.

"Night is falling, Tryntje," he said. "Where can we sleep?"

Tryntje looked around her, as she sat on her heels beside him, but did not answer.

Overhead Tom heard a terrible noise. At first he thought that the trees were being stirred by the wind. But it was more than that.

It was like the roar of an ocean of

airships overhead. Closer and closer it came, until the two children stopped their ears.

"Look!" Tom pointed.

Overhead they saw hundreds of storks flapping and flying. They seemed to stop right above Tom and Tryntje and then dropped down slowly.

They were now so close that the children could see that in their beaks they carried little towels. Wrapped in those towels, as in hammocks, swung babies —hundreds of wriggling, cooing, gurgling babies!

The storks began to flap again. They flapped and flapped. They seemed to be jumping in the air. They bounced

the babies up and caught them again.

"Oh, they will surely drop them!" cried Tom.

As the words left his lips, all the babies came tumbling down! They all fell to earth at once upon Tom.

They came thump, thump, thump, on his back, on his head, on his neck—soft, warm, fat, wriggling babies! Tom dared not struggle. He feared to hurt the little things. But, oh, how they hurt him!

Slowly he turned upon his back and opened his eyes which he had closed tightly when the baby-shower had begun.

Sitting upon him, in his own garden, was his own baby sister, Josie. She

was pounding and thumping him with her baby fists.

"Wake up! Supper is ready!"

"So you are one of them!" cried the half-asleep boy. "Where are all the rest? Where is Tryntje? Where—?"

"Stop dreaming, Tom," said the little sister. "Come. I's hungry!"

So saying, she ran off. The perplexed Tom stared ahead of him. Slowly he began to realize that his last few hours had been passed in dreamland.

CHAPTER VIII

A STRANGE RIDE

But Tom knew that it was not all a dream. He knew that Tryntje really existed, for he had her letter.

He knew, too, that all she told and showed him about Holland was true. For he could read about it in his Dutch book. Only it was so much nicer to see it all.

Why didn't Tryntje write? Tom hoped to have her answer soon. Each day when he came home from school he looked for it.

One day he did indeed find awaiting him a little envelope addressed in a

childish hand. It was postmarked "Volendam, Netherlands."

A letter from Tryntje! Into the garden went Tom, with the precious letter tucked into his blouse.

Under the tree he sat and opening it carefully, he read:

"Dear Tom,

Thank you for writing. I am lonesome for my brother, Jan Schulder. He sailed to America. Can you find him?

Your friend,

Tryntje Schulder."

Many times over did Tom read the letter. She did not mention their trips together. He was disappointed.

But then that was silly of him! How

MIDDLEBURG ON MARKET DAY

could she know? It had been, after all, his dream—and not hers!

She asked him to find Jan. Jan Schulder was Tryntje's brother, and he was somewhere in America. Even Tom, who was not very old, knew that it would be a terrific task to find a person in his big country.

That night Tom talked to his father about it. Father was doubtful, but gave Tom to understand that it would not be impossible to find a Hollander who had just landed.

The Immigration Office would surely have a list of the names of those people coming from foreign shores. Such people are called immigrants.

Tom persuaded his father to try to

find the little Dutch girl's brother. Smiling at his son's strange request, Father agreed to try.

For many days, Tom was too busy or too wide awake to visit Tryntje. Several times, however, he tried to go to sleep under the tree.

But sleep would not come. Soon he began to fear that he would never again return to that land of glorious adventure, and to his little Dutch playmate.

But the days rolled by merrily enough. Tom read all the books he could find that told about Holland. He wanted to know more about the country which interested him so.

One morning, as he was walking in

his garden, he saw the beginnings of the tulip shoots pushing through the ground. His joy was great.

From now on, he counted the days until the time when his garden should blossom into color and beauty. He thought, too, of Holland and of the fields there. He knew the fields were much bigger than his.

It was on this day that Tom's school gave a picnic. Tom went along through the woods, gathering berries and playing with the rest of the children.

But his thoughts were with Tryntje. The deep, silent woods brought him once more to the wood in The Hague, where he had left her.

He wondered whether he should find

her again if he went back. While he was thinking, he suddenly saw that the other children had walked far ahead of him.

"Hallo!" called Tom.

But only an echo answered him.

For some time, he walked along, trying to find his companions. But the farther he walked, the deeper into the woods he went.

At last he saw that he was hopelessly lost. He did not know which way to turn nor what to do.

"But I shall not cry," thought Tom. "Tryntje and I have had more terrible adventures than this, and we did not cry."

It was growing very dark.

A little fearfully, Tom raised his eyes to the sky, remembering the storks. But no! He was not in Holland. He was awake and in his own country.

Oh, how tired he felt! Walking all day and playing hard made him want to rest. So he threw himself down on the soft forest ground.

At once it seemed to Tom he felt some one pulling at his sleeve. He turned quickly. To his surprise he found that he was really in the same wood with Tryntje!

"Hello, Tryntje!" he said, as he saw the little girl near him. "Well, I did come back; didn't I?"

"What do you mean?" asked Tryntje. "You haven't been away, Tom."

Tom thought best to make no reply to this.

Of course, he knew that he had left Tryntje, and for a long, long time.

But he thought best to let it go. It was always best, in fairy tales, to believe and say nothing. Tom believed.

He noticed then that the storks were still hovering above them. Funny he hadn't noticed that before! And so many of them, too.

But now they were not flapping. They were hovering over them and swaying slowly back and forth.

"Where are the babies?" inquired Tom.

"They are all born," said Tryntje, seriously.

"Oh!" Tom was again believing very hard.

He thought, however, of Josie. Still, there were the storks.

"What do they want? Why are they staying here?" he asked.

"Let us ask them," replied Tryntje. And, waving her hand, she called, "Come, stork, and tell us why you are here."

One of the big birds slowly dropped to earth. He alighted beside the children. With his beak he opened the towel wide upon the ground. The towel was very large—large enough for many babies to ride in.

Tryntje suddenly cried, "Why, he wants us to step into it. He wants us

to ride through the air with him. Come, Tom!"

The children sat upon the huge towel. The bird gathered it up in his beak. He rose into the air with his burden.

Away they flew.

"If he should drop the towel!" whispered Tom.

Tryntje laughed.

"Do not fear," she said. "He will not drop it. He is kind and loves children. He is taking us to other parts of Holland. Now you shall see some fine sights."

"Look below at that land with the many strange villages," cried Tom.

Tom saw a big market place. He saw women in big, lacy, floppy hats,

MIDDLEBURG WOMEN

unlike Tryntje's in shape, and with little golden ears standing out from each side. They were walking about and selling things.

"That is Middleburg. We are flying over the Zeeland Islands, and it

is their market day," said Tryntje.

Men in tight jackets and Dutch-cut hair smoked long, curly pipes. Meanwhile, they stood about the streets talking.

Many tourists were there, too. They were watching and taking snapshots of the people in their old-fashioned dress.

When they had passed Middleburg, Tryntje began to chuckle. She pointed to another village, which had come into sight.

"You will laugh when I tell you about that town," she said. "It is called Domburg. Do you know why?"

"No, but 'dumb' means 'stupid' in our country!" replied Tom.

"Yes, and here, too. I will tell you how that city became known as Domburg—the 'burg' (town) of the 'dom' (stupid) people!" laughed Tryntje.

"When the city was being built, some workmen tried to carry a large beam into the cathedral. The cathedral door was too small to take the big piece of wood. For the workmen were trying to make it go through the door frontwise.

"Hot and puzzled, after many attempts, they called the Mayor of the town, and the Council. They all scratched their heads. They could not figure out how to bring the long beam into the cathedral.

"As they stood puzzling, a little

MIDDLEBURG WOMEN AND CHILDREN

bird was seen to fly into a tiny window. It had a long straw in its mouth. The bird turned itself to the side, so that the straw went through the window lengthwise.

"When the workmen and the Coun-

cil saw this, they laughed at their folly.

"They said, 'We are indeed stupid townspeople!'

"And so Domburg has always been the name of that village!"

On and on flew the stork. The children cuddled down in their warm, soft cradle and felt like babies.

"Zeeland was once below the sea," said Tryntje. "The dike and the windmills have made land where once all was water. 'God made the sea. We made the land,' say the Dutch. The emblem of Zeeland is a lion swimming through the waves, with the words, 'I swim and keep my head above water.'"

"It must be, then, from Holland that the words first came, 'Keep your head above water,'" said Tom. "For you Dutch are surely always struggling to do that!"

"Yes," said Tryntje. "And when you see what they are doing to the Zuider Zee, you will think that more than ever!"

"You have spoken of that before, Tryntje," said Tom. "Can we not go and see it?"

"Yes," she replied. "We are going there now."

The stork flew on for what seemed to the children many hours.

At last Tryntje cried, "Oh, look, Tom! See below!"

The little American boy was glad to know that they were going to land at last.

"The Zuider Zee!" cried Tryntje, clapping her hands.

"At last you will see what I have told you so much about. You shall take back to America with you the news that Holland is doing one of the greatest things in all its history!" she told him.

As the stork flew more slowly and lower, Tom saw below him a group of busy workmen, working at machines. The little low country was forever struggling with her enemy, the sea.

Now she was about to build the greatest of all her engineering works.

She was draining her big, deep Zuider Zee.

She was making more land out of sea. She was making Holland bigger and the sea smaller.

"Oh! Good-bye, old sea, old Zuider Zee!" called Tryntje, as they sailed over the scene of action. "Next time I see you I won't see you at all!"

Tryntje laughed and looked at Tom for approval of her joke.

But Tom was not listening. He was thinking about the terrific task to which these sturdy Dutchmen had set themselves. He was thinking of their courage.

He had heard how many times a year the sea still covers parts of Windmill

Land. Often it rushes madly over broken dikes and wrecks the work of years. Still those people keep right on.

Tom shook his fist at the sea.

"Why do you do that?" asked Tryntje.

"Because the sea is wicked and cruel to this poor little country," replied Tom.

"Oh, no!" laughed the little Dutch girl. "We do not hate the sea. We have much to thank him for. He brings us fish! Oh, so many people make a living through that old Mr. Sea!

"He is just a bad boy sometimes and tries to break away from us. But we always get him back into his chains!"

CHAPTER IX
TROUBLES IN TREE TOWN

The scene of so much interest to Tom, as well as to the entire world, slowly faded from sight. The next thing the children knew, they were looking down upon many speckled housetops and glistening canals.

"Oh, I think this is the prettiest village I've ever seen!" exclaimed Tom.

"And you'll say it's the most interesting, too. For we shall stop and see what's going on in it!" smiled Tryntje.

Then she leaned out of the soft, warm towel nest. Making a trumpet of her hands, she called to their stork,

"Will you stop, please, Mr. Stork? We wish to see Alsmeer, the city of funny trees!"

Down dropped their stork. To himself, Tom called it their "stork-o'-plane."

He had been wishing all through this flight that he could really and truly fly over his own home in America. He would paint the words, "Tom's Stork-o'-Plane" on the bird's side. Wouldn't his playmates stare?

But his fancies were ended in a heavy bump. It all but knocked him and his companion out of their nest. They had landed.

The stork was sitting down to rest after his long voyage. There was a

HUNDREDS OF FUNNY LOOKING TREES

tiny play village surrounding them.

"Come, come!" Tryntje called, and jumped out as she called. "Now we'll see Alsmeer, the funny tree town!"

Tom asked what she meant by funny tree town. He could see nothing funny

about the trees, which lined neat little village streets.

"Oh, you'll see them—fields and fields of them! All are cut like men and babies and boats and birds. Come along!" she said.

She pulled Tom along the streets of many canals. All the houses in the village had brightly painted bridges. They crossed canals leading up to the people's front doors.

Each house had a bridge of its own. What fun to own a boat and sail it on your own private canal, from your own private bridge! And then came the sight of which Tryntje had spoken. It consisted of hundreds of the funniest-looking trees Tom had ever seen.

They were little boxwood trees cut into various shapes. There were turkeys and windmills and bowls and bears. There were babies in cradles and sailboats and clowns.

They were perfectly carved. Think of carving trees the way you carve wood!

A man was there. The children walked up to him. He had a pleasant face. When he spoke his voice matched his face.

"Good day, little ones," said the man, who had a large pair of scissors in his hand. "Do you want to see me cut trees?"

"Yes, yes, please!" Tom answered. "It must be a very hard thing to do!"

"Well," smiled the man, "it is hard when they don't stand still. Sometimes they are very wiggly."

"O-oh!" Tom couldn't say anything else.

He thought maybe the man was teasing, but he wasn't sure. The man then started cutting. He cut a plain tree—clip, clip, so fast! The scissors flew!

Pretty soon it took the shape of something. But Tom didn't know yet what it was.

The man told them that he and his father were the only people in the village who knew how to do this cutting work. He told them that his father's father's father, and oh, so many fathers back had cut trees!

The secret was handed down through generations, he told them. It was a great art. Very few people in Holland knew it.

Only one other family knew it.

They lived in another part of the Netherlands. He and his father shipped these funny trees all over the world. They went to every part of Europe.

The man was making a little boy tree. It was surely a little boy tree, and it looked like Tom himself.

"Oh! It's I!" Tom almost shrieked.

"Yes," the man replied. "It is you. It is a little boy. And now I shall make a little girl. See!"

He started on another plain tree.

Tom could hardly take his eyes off of the Tom tree.

"What if it were true they moved sometimes?" Tom had the question on his lips. "If it comes to life—"

But just then Tryntje gave a squeal and jumped up and down.

"Look at my little lace cap! O-oh! It's going to be a Tryntje tree! A Tryntje tree!" she cried.

Sure enough, it was a Tryntje tree. The children stood before the two little carved boxwood children and saw just how they themselves looked.

"It's like looking into a mirror," began Tryntje.

"A green mirror!" finished Tom.

They looked around to thank the

CUTTING TREES IN "TREE TOWN"

"father's father's man," but he had disappeared. There he was at the other end of the field cutting some more trees.

Tom was just a little uneasy.

He had not forgotten that remark, "Sometimes they are very wiggly!"

He said to Tryntje, "Do you think they move sometimes? Do you think maybe they come to life sometimes?"

Tryntje did not answer. She could not answer, for just then the answer came by itself.

The two children's eyes grew big enough to pop. Their feet seemed to stick to their places as though they had been glued.

For the answer to Tom's question

was before them, and it said, "Yes—yes."

The two tree children were moving!

But Tom and Tryntje were still. They could not move. They only stood and watched the tree children. Meanwhile the tree children smiled at each other and started talking.

"Where shall we go from here, Tryntje?" asked Tom Tree.

"Let us go home, Tom," said Tryntje Tree, yawning. "I am tired."

Tom had horrible thoughts. What if he, the real Tom, had been turned into a tree and the Tree Tom had become alive?

What would his mother do if a green, prickly Tom came home to her? What

would Tryntje's mother do if she found a green, prickly face under the lacy cap, instead of her little girl's soft, pink and white face?

The tree children were walking away. They stopped to talk with a baby tree sitting in a cradle tree. Tom saw that the baby tree waved its arms. He heard it coo.

Tom tried to turn to the real Tryntje, but he could not move. Yes. It was just as he had thought. These tree children had taken his and Tryntje's powers of motion away from them.

He was still alive, certainly, for he could see and hear and think. But he could not move! He tried to talk.

"Tryntje!"

Yes; his voice came. It was low and husky, but it was there.

"Tom!" A husky, low answer came from Tryntje by his side.

"Tryntje, we've been taken away by those trees!" he managed to say.

She sighed.

"Tryntje, see," breathed Tom. "Those tree children are waking up all the other trees. Oh, it was true what the father's father's man said. They do move. They are wiggly!"

Just then the whole field seemed to move. All the newly-cut trees began to walk about. The sound of talking grew louder and louder. The two real children grew more and more terrified.

Then, coming toward them, they saw a group of trees. These trees laughed and seemed to bounce along over the field.

The Tom and Tryntje trees were among them, laughing more loudly than any of the others. They stood in front of the children.

There was a turkey—a green tree turkey. He was a sight!

There was also a green baby buggy pushed by a green tree nurse. A green-faced tree baby, waving a green rattle, sat inside the buggy.

There were a green tree dog and a green tree cat, and lots of other things made of green trees. They all stood in front of the children and laughed.

How they laughed! Then Tom Tree said, "What sillies! They can't move! See! They can't do anything. And they're not green."

At this, the whole group began to shout with laughter.

Now Tom was a real boy. He was frightened, it is true. For what boy wouldn't have been in the midst of such an adventure?

But his real boy self began to show itself. His fists were trying very hard to clench. His face grew red with the effort.

"Look! The boy is red!" shrieked a tall clown tree.

And the rest howled a chorus. Tom made an effort.

He bellowed loudly, "I can talk!"

There was silence. They all stopped laughing. They stared in amazement.

Then Tom Tree stepped up in front of the real Tom and shouted at him, "But what good will talking do you, when you can't hit?"

With that he gave Tom a terrible punch right in the stomach. Tom felt queer for a moment, but he soon came to himself. His face grew redder than ever.

The crowd of trees was now in an uproar of noisy glee.

"Hit again! Hit again!" called the tree crowd.

From Tom's side he could hear sobs. The real Tryntje was crying. Poor lit-

THERE WERE WINDMILLS AND BOWLS AND BEARS

tle real Tryntje! And Tom could do nothing.

Tryntje Tree came up to the real Tryntje and laughed in her face.

"You can cry. But that's all you can do! What good is crying?" she jeered.

With that, the naughty tree girl pulled poor Tryntje's lacy cap right over her little, crying face. Again the crowd howled with laughter.

Tom's whole body seemed to be on fire. He had never been so angry in all his life.

If only he could move! If only he could pounce upon that crowd! He wouldn't be afraid to tackle the lot of them alone, if only—

Just then, he saw something that he hadn't noticed before. A horse was roaming the field. He was not with the tree group. It must be a real horse, not a tree one. Then he heard Tom Tree telling something to the rest of the green people.

"Let us throw them into the canal," said Tom Tree. "They are no good. They can only talk. What good is talking? Come! We shall all lift them up and throw them—one, two, three—away to sea!"

Tom's brain had not stopped. In fact, Tom's brain had never worked so fast before.

It was working away by itself, as Tom afterward decided. For the idea had come to him, without his thinking about it.

Therefore he said, "You had best not throw us away, or I shall call the horse!"

Magic words! The crowd drew back.

"I shall call him, anyway. Come,

horse! Come, horse! Eat them up, up, up!" he shouted.

From afar off the horse put up his head and listened.

"They are made of nice, juicy green grass! Just what you like to eat! Come! Have a meal!" called Tom.

Of course the horse couldn't understand. But the tree people, not knowing the ways of real people and animals, thought he could.

They started to run away, and they ran and ran. The children were now free if only they, too, could run. But they could not move a muscle.

"My talking has saved us once," thought Tom. "Now let me see if I can make it take us away from here."

TREE BABIES IN TREE CRADLES

Lifting his voice as loudly as he could, he shouted, "Oh! Mr. Father's Father's Man!"

Over and over he repeated this.

In the meantime, poor Tryntje was a sorry sight. Her face was covered by

the lacy cap, which bad Tryntje Tree had pulled down. Of course neither she nor Tom could lift a hand to pull it up.

In fact, Tom could not turn his head to see the distress of his friend. He could only listen to her sobs. He did not know that large tears were splashing down from beneath the lacy cap.

"Hooray!" squealed Tom. And the sobs stopped.

From across the field came the man of the pleasant face. He came up to the children. His pleasant face changed to a puzzled one.

"Why, what—?" he began.

Tom told him.

"Why, what—?" He scratched his head with the puzzled face on it.

Tom broke in with, "Can't you carry us away from here? Those trees will throw us into the sea. We can't move. Please help!"

The puzzled face became pleasant again. The big father's father's man picked up the two children, one under each arm. Then he walked off across the field with them.

CHAPTER X

VOLENDAM AGAIN

Everything had changed. A moment ago, Tom had felt cold, stiff, and frightened. Now he felt all warm and safe.

He was drifting along with Tryntje by his side in the folds of something soft. It took a few moments for his eyes to decide to open.

When they did he found that he and Tryntje were lying at the bottom of a fisherman's red-sailed boat. They were all wrapped up in a billowy red sail.

Tryntje was asleep. Tom lay quiet-

ly and tried to think how he had come to this delightful spot.

The sea was rocking him gently. A waving, brick-red sail was flapping above.

What did it all mean? He thought of the tree people and shuddered. Then he moved his arms and legs slowly to make sure that he was himself again.

The last he remembered was the big, pleasant-faced father's father's man carrying Tryntje and himself across the field. He must have slept until now.

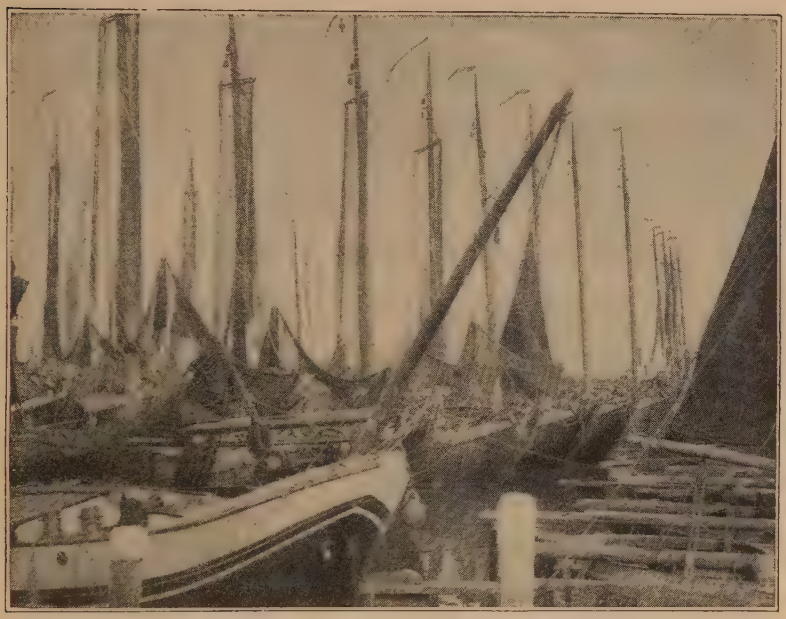
Oh, well! It never helped to try to figure things out. So Tom let himself drift and stopped thinking.

After a short time, he felt a poke in his side. Jumping up, he saw Tryntje sitting erect beside him. She was pointing with one hand, while she rubbed her eyes with the other.

"We're home, Tom!" she cried joyfully. "We're in Volendam! See the ships! See the harbor. Oh! My home! My mother and father!"

Then Tom recognized Volendam, where he had first met Tryntje. It was the same quaint town from which they had set sail in her fairy cap.

He felt tired and wished he, too, could go home. Tryntje would soon be folded in her mother's arms. But he, Tom, would have to stand and



"WE'RE IN VOLENDAM! SEE THE SHIPS!"

watch them. And he would be very far away from his home.

"Why are you sad, Tom? Are you not glad to see my home again?" asked Tryntje.

"Yes," said Tom, trying bravely to

hide his feelings. "But some day you shall come to my home. You know I have a home, too!"

The last words nearly ended in a sob. It would have been a sob if the boat had not landed at that moment.

With all the excitement of arriving, Tom's worries were forgotten by all but Tom. Soon the two children were standing in the middle of the clean little one-room Schulder house.

Mother and Father were greatly excited. But they talked Dutch, so Tom could not tell what it meant. He could only stand in the middle of the room and yawn, although he tried hard not to do so.

At last Tryntje's mother put her arm around him and said kindly, "Ah, poor boy! He is tired. Come. We shall put you into a little bed."

Tom went with her willingly. He soon found himself tucked into the softest bed he had ever felt.

He was going to sleep in a cupboard bed. Yes; he was in bed in the wall of the little room.

He looked out and saw Tryntje. She was across the room in another cupboard bed. The covers were pulled up to her chin.

"We did have a fine trip; didn't we, Tom?" she asked sleepily.

Tom smiled.

"Oh, but Tom," she went on, "we

didn't see all of Holland, you know. I could show you so much more. Why, even across the way is the tiny island of Marken. There the little boys are dressed just like girls until they are older than you are. They wear curls, Tom, long curls. They wear fancy dresses with lace."

"What?" exclaimed Tom.

He had been nearly lulled to sleep by the drone of Tryntje's voice. Now he was suddenly aroused by these last words.

"They wear long curls and fancy dresses?" he asked.

"Yes," said Tryntje, "the boys wear long curls and fancy dresses with lace until they are older than you are."

"Can we go there and see them?" asked Tom, turning over on his side and sighing comfortably.

There was silence from across the room. Then came muffled sounds: "Curls—fancy dresses with lace—to see them. Oh, Jan!"

And then Tryntje was asleep.

Tom soon dropped off. But as he fell asleep, his last thought was about Tryntje's brother Jan. Poor Tryntje could not forget her Jan!

CHAPTER XI

WHERE IS JAN?

With all the bird noises, it was always hard to sleep in the mornings.

Tom stretched and then lay still and listened. These were not Volendam noises. These were home noises. He was at home.

His eyes roved around the room and met the familiar sight of bright-colored wall paper. He saw Mother's picture, Father's picture, Josie's picture, John's picture.

He was in his bed in his own room. But how soft it felt! It felt like Tryntje's cupboard bed. How could

he have gone to sleep in one bed and wakened up in another?

But now Tom knew and felt that he was really awake. For he was enjoying the sunshine and bird sounds and the smell of flowers coming through his open window.

Funny, how one never felt just like this asleep, even in dreams! Oh, but had that all been a dream? So much had happened, and it was all clear to Tom.

From beneath his window, he heard whistling. He jumped out of bed and thrust out a tousled head.

There was Father digging. Why, it must be a holiday. Father was at home only on holidays.

"Hello, Father. I'm back!" he shouted.

The words popped out before Tom realized what he had said. Then he turned as red as he had turned in the tree town. Only this time it was not from anger, but from embarrassment.

For Father knew quite well that he hadn't been away at all. He probably thought that Tom had only overslept, like a lazy boy.

Father leaned on his spade.

"Welcome!" he called. "But I happen to know you came back because I carried you in my own two arms!"

"Carried me?" exclaimed Tom.

Then Father told Tom how he had

been lost all night in the forest. This had happened when he had strayed from the school picnic.

Father told him how the whole school had frantically searched for him. Of course the family had searched even more frantically.

Father told Tom how, at last, at break of day, he, Father, had found the boy fast asleep with a large pine cone on top of him. It had fallen out of the tree under which he had slept. And Father had carried him home.

Tom was thinking very hard. Some of the thinking seeped through, so that he couldn't help saying, "So you were the father's father's man who

carried me!" Father chuckled, but thought it best to begin digging again.

While Tom was dressing, he realized many things. Tom Tree's punch in the stomach was, of course, the big pine cone falling on him. Of course.

The soft cupboard bed had been his own! Oh, it was a very queer dream. But now that it was over, there was only one thing that troubled Tom.

He was soon helping Father dig.

"Can't you find Jan Schulder, Father?" he asked.

Father looked up quickly.

"I forgot to tell you, son. I've tried hard, but the wandering Hol-

lander has not been heard of. Certainly he has not landed here, or I should have found him for you."

Poor Tryntje! Tom wanted so to write and tell her that Jan was found. Then how happy she would be to know that he was here, safe with her little American friend.

For Tom had decided to ask Father to engage Jan as gardener. He was sure Father would do it. Hollanders are such good gardeners.

And Tryntje's last words had been, "Oh, Jan!"

But Tom was forced to write this letter:

"Dear Tryntje:

When I came home I asked Father,

and he said Jan did not land in America. I wish I could find him for you. He could help me tend my tulips. We would talk of you.

Your friend,

Tom."

He wanted so much to say something about their trip. But he knew that it had been his dream. So she could know nothing about it.

He felt, though, that maybe she did know. He liked to feel it. That was why he didn't write about it.

Suppose she had answered, "What do you mean?" or something like that.

He would have been greatly disappointed.

So he mailed the letter and settled down to his school work. Each day he watched the tulips. He knew that soon they would make his garden a scene of glory.

The little tulip bulb, which had come with Tryntje's note, was growing, too. It was still surrounded by its fence, which kept it safe.

One day when Tom came home from school, something exciting was taking place beside his little Tryntje tulip bulb.

A big man was holding his little sister Josie by the arm. And she was kicking at him with all her might.

Tom rushed up. No one could mistreat his sister Josie! He stalked

up to the big man. Josie was squealing.

Tom shouted, "Let her alone, or I'll — I'll —"

The man turned his face. He was very red and smiling. He had on a funny black cap. His trousers Tom noticed for the first time, were baggy.

He looked jolly enough, but he was holding Josie. And Josie did not like it.

"Stop! Let me go!" she squealed.

"Let her go!" roared Tom.

The man let her go.

Then he turned to Tom and said, "Excuse me. I thought it was not right to have the tulip pulled up!"

Tom looked quickly at the Tryntje tulip. It had been disturbed. Kneeling quickly, he patted the earth into place.

The man knelt down and helped him. His fingers were deft.

"Is it your flower?" he asked.

"Yes," answered Tom.

Then he jumped up, and it was his turn to catch hold of Josie.

"You naughty girl!" he said. "Were you touching Tom's tulip?"

Josie tried to get away.

"If I pull it up, I am strong girl. All the earth had hold of the other end, Tom!" she murmured.

Her eyes were so big and innocent that Tom had to laugh and let her

go. The man laughed, too. Then he stooped down, lifted a bundle, and swung it across his shoulder.

"Do you know whether the master of the house is at home?" he asked Tom.

"The master" probably meant Father.

"No," answered the master's son. "Father is in the city at his office."

"Ah, then you are Tom!" exclaimed the stranger.

The man dropped his bundle. His face became all wrinkled in the jolliest smile Tom had ever seen. He grasped the boy's hand.

"I'm Jan. Jan Schulder!" he said.

CHAPTER XII

TRYNTJE TAKES FLIGHT

"Dear Tom: I am not very happy because you cannot find Jan. But thank you.

Your friend,

Tryntje."

This sad little note arrived after Jan Schulder had been the gardener at Tom's home for several weeks. Those weeks had been filled with joy and sunshine for Tom.

It was not long before he understood Tryntje's love for her big, sturdy Dutch brother.

Jan was so full of stories that he

could interest Tom for hours. Of course he told about his country, and that was a subject Tom loved.

Sometimes Jan spoke of Tryntje, his little sister. Then it was always hard for Tom not to tell him about his many dream trips with her through Holland.

But he feared that big Jan might laugh at him or perhaps say, "Why, that is not at all like Holland or Tryntje."

So he only listened. Strange to say, the things Jan told about the Lowlands were exactly what Tom had seen and heard while with Tryntje.

Together they made the tulip beds very beautiful. Jan knew the secrets

of flower life. He knew the secrets of his flower country. He often talked to Father about them.

It was through Father's efforts that Jan had come to stay with them. For when Jan had landed, he had been greeted with a note.

Father had left it for him at the immigration office. The note asked a Jan Schulder, from Volendam, to come to Father's address, because his son Tom had a message for him.

So just as soon as Jan had stepped off the boat, he had gone to Tom's home.

And that was how Tom happened to find him looking for the master of the house. That is how he found

Jan saving his beloved Tryntje tulip from Josie. That is why he knew Tom by name!

Jan was a jolly companion. It was not surprising that little Tryntje missed him. Together, he and Tom wrote a letter. It was full of the good news of Jan's arrival.

It said:

"Dear Tryntje:

Jan has arrived. We are so happy. Now we talk of you.

Your friend,

Tom."

In Volendam, Tryntje watched as the postman went away on his bicycle. Thus her sad little letter to Tom began its journey to America.

When Tom and Jan read that sad little letter, they smiled. They knew that soon the little girl would receive their new letter. It would be the happy letter, telling of Jan's arrival.

But Tryntje did not know this. She only knew about Tom's letter, saying that Jan had not come. So she decided to go to America herself.

It would be a hard task—going to America! But it had to be done. Tryntje made her plans.

After school that day, she would not go home. She would go to America, instead.

"A letter for Tryntje!" called Mother.

At the same time she put a small

TRYNTJE'S SCHOOL IN VOLENDAM

brown envelope, addressed in school-boy fashion, on the table.

Tryntje was, of course, at school. But Tryntje's little brother was there. He had an idea.

"I will take it to school," said he,

"and put it into her shoe while she is studying. Then when she comes out she will find it in her shoe. She will read it right away and be glad."

And he hurried away to the schoolhouse with Tom's letter containing the good news. He put it into one of Tryntje's shoes. He found them cosily tucked in their cubby-hole beside all the other shoes.

Tryntje was very much excited when she came out of school that day. For she was going to America!

She slipped her feet, in their heavy woolen stockings, into her shoes. She did not know that a very precious letter was in the toe of one shoe.

This letter would have saved her

her trip if she had read it. But her little feet, in their heavy shoes, did not feel the thin envelope.

So Tryntje started to klomp all the way to Amsterdam. Tom's letter klomped along, unopened, unread.

Some American tourists in a big automobile came driving along. They were going to Amsterdam. They asked Tryntje to ride. In a few moments she was in Amsterdam near the wharf where the big ships leave for America.

A little girl wearing wooden shoes and a lacy cap is hard to hide. But this one managed to hide herself among boxes of bulbs. The bulbs were at the bottom of a large steamer

sailing from Amsterdam that day.

It had not been pleasant squeezing into a crate and squashing her lacy cap. It was just as unpleasant to be hoisted roughly upon the ship.

And now in the middle of the rolling ocean, it was less pleasant than ever. But with all the unpleasantness, it was nice to know that she was on her way to Jan.

For little Tryntje never doubted that her love would find her brother the moment she set foot upon American soil.

For what seemed many days, she lay quietly and uncomfortably in her hiding place. It was not hard to be quiet because she felt so very ill.

She did not want to move. So nobody knew she was there.

But at last some one found it out. A sailor found Tryntje, because he heard her. He heard her laughing!

Yes; Tryntje was laughing merrily, all to herself, over a letter. She had found the letter in her shoe!

That was how the people on the big boat knew that there was a little Dutch stowaway among them.

She had given herself away by laughing. She had laughed with joy at knowing about Jan. Also, she had laughed at herself for being on her way to America, when Jan was already found.

It was no wonder everyone on board

was amused by the sight of the little Volendam girl. For the Captain showed her to the passengers of the ship.

But Tryntje was so happy that she did not mind their exclamations and smiles.

She looked up at the Captain and asked, "May I please get off your boat and go back to Volendam? Because Jan is found!"

A burst of laughter from the passengers greeted her request. But she did not mind that, either.

CHAPTER XIII

A BIRTHDAY SURPRISE

For several days, Tom missed his jolly garden companion. Jan had been going to the city on business—mysterious business!

The first day Jan went, he had been called by Tom's father. When Jan arrived at the office of Tom's father in the city, the surprising news was told him.

Tom's father said, "Jan, your little sister from Volendam has arrived on a ship as a stowaway."

Jan had to hold on to Father's desk to keep himself steady.

"On a ship? Stowaway—Tryntje?" gasped Jan.

"Yes," answered Father. "She gave our address to the captain. He has written to me asking me to come and get her."

Jan stood and stared. He could not believe that his baby sister would run away like that.

"What—Why did she do such a thing?"

Father patted Jan's shoulder.

"Do not worry," he said kindly. "Go and get the young rascal and take her to the house. But," he added, "do not tell Tom anything about this."

Then Father bade Jan sit down and listen while he explained.

"You see, Jan, my boy is going to have a birthday in a very few days."

"Yes, sir," nodded Jan. "He has told me so."

"And," went on Father, "a very fine surprise awaits him. I am planning to give him the news that we are going to Holland next month. We are all going to Holland next month on my friend's ship."

Jan listened attentively. He was delighted.

He knew how delighted his little friend Tom would be when he should hear this news.

"It will be the finest surprise you could give Tom," Jan said.

He wondered, though, what it all had

to do with not telling about Tryntje's arrival.

"No," said Father, "it will not be the finest. The finest surprise will be Tryntje."

The two men talked for several moments.

They made plans. Jan then understood why that coming trip to Holland had so much to do with his little sister's arrival.

"Now, say nothing to Tom," cautioned Father, as Jan was going out the door. "And you may cable your family in Volendam that Tryntje is safe with us. Tell them that she will return to them next month with you. Tell them that a family of American

tourists will come with you. So she will be safe."

The second time Jan left for the city he went to get Tryntje.

It was Tom's birthday.

The sun beat down upon the tulips. The little boy walked out into their midst.

Coming towards him was Jan. Jan wished him a happy birthday. Then together, they sat down under Tom's favorite tree.

"Will you close your eyes and try to dream, Tom?" asked Jan suddenly.

"Why, Jan, how can I dream in the morning, and on my birthday?" laughed Tom.

"You can, because I want to have

"HAPPY, HAPPY BIRTHDAY, TOM!"

your eyes closed while I bring you my birthday gift. Now do not peep, and perhaps—who knows?—you may fall asleep!"

With these mysterious words, Jan arose from Tom's side. The boy closed

his eyes obediently, though it all seemed strange to him.

Jan disappeared. Still Tom sat with his head tilted back against the tree and his eyes tightly shut.

"Tom," a little muffled voice called.

Tom dared not open his eyes.

"Tom! Come!"

Again the voice—Tryntje's voice. Oh, this was nonsense! He wasn't asleep. Yet the voice was Tryntje's. It called almost angrily now.

Tom opened his eyes. Jan was gone, and before Tom stood a large crate of tulip bulbs. Tom knew it was a tulip bulb crate because he had seen so many of the same kind.

He rubbed his eyes. No doubt he had

dropped to sleep just for a moment and had heard Tryntje's voice very faintly.

But now he was awake, and he intended to stay that way. It wouldn't do to nap on one's birthday. There was too much to do and see, with Jan by one's side.

He started to open the crate. What a fine gift from Jan! What a thoughtful gift from Jan!

"Tom! Tom! Tom!"

The voice nearly knocked him over. It was inside the crate. Tryntje was inside the crate! Oh, dear! He was dreaming after all.

He answered, "Yes, yes, Tryntje. I'm here. I'll help you out."

He opened the crate. It was Tryntje. But there were no tulip bulbs—only Tryntje.

She stood up and jumped out.

Then she threw her arms about Tom's neck and cried the Dutch words for "Happy birthday!"

They sounded like nothing Tom had ever heard before in his life.

So he said, "Yes. But—"

Then he stopped and looked about him, expecting to see that they were in Windmill Land. But they were in Tom's garden. Jan was coming across the field smiling.

"Do you like my birthday gift, Tom?" asked Jan, looking merrily at Tom and then at Tryntje.

The little Dutch girl was smiling, too. She and her brother stood beaming at Tom. Tom stood and looked at them, but he did not beam. He was puzzled.

"What do you mean, Jan? Isn't this a dream adventure? Or am I really awake?" he asked.

"You are very much awake, Tom." laughed Jan. "And Tryntje has come to stay with us for a month. Then—"

But Tryntje clapped her hand over Jan's mouth.

"No—no. Tom's father will tell that part of the birthday surprise!" she exclaimed.

"Yes," agreed Jan. "You are right. That part of the birthday surprise comes later."

Then Tryntje jumped up and down and clapped her hands.

"Oh, but I am happy! And soon we all shall go back to Holland!" she cried.

She suddenly sat down on the ground, with her big full skirts all around her.

She looked very unhappy. She covered her mouth with her two hands, and her eyes were big and round. Her cheeks grew red.

Jan looked down at her seriously, and shook his head.

"Naughty! You have told," he said.

And the tears began to gather.

"Naughty!" he repeated.

And the tears fell—splash! But Tom knelt beside her.

"Don't cry, Tryntje," he said. "Don't cry on my birthday. I liked to hear the surprise from you, anyway. And I can be surprised all over again when Father tells me."

"Oh, nice Tom! And now I will speak my piece to you," she said.

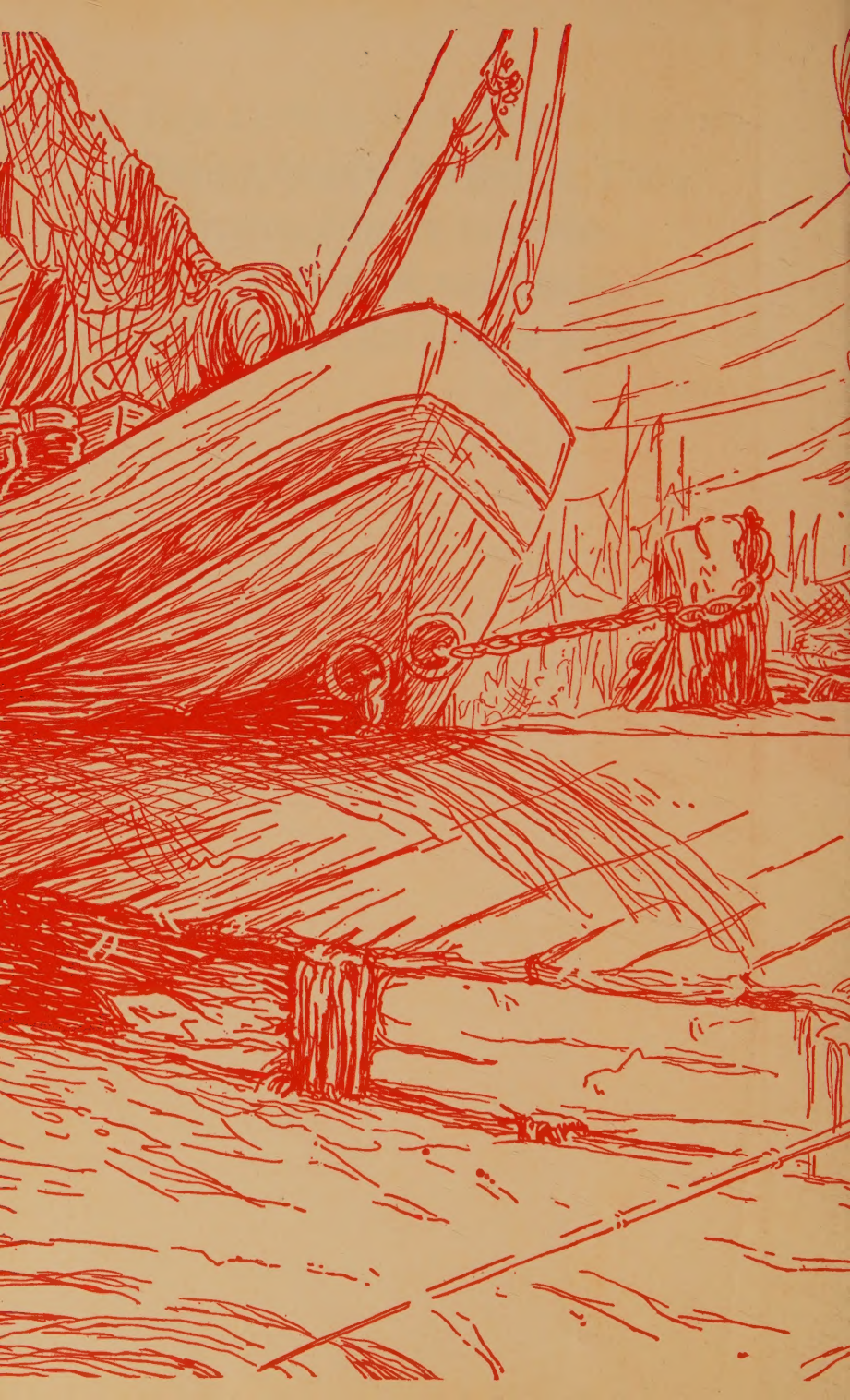
Tom and Jan sat on the ground, cross-legged.

They lifted their faces to the lacy-capped girl. She stood in her wooden shoes and recited what Jan had taught her.

She could not speak English so very well. She was just a little embarrassed, and she began slowly:

"Happy, happy, Tom-day, birth—Oh, no! Not right.

"Happy, happy birthday, Tom,
Many, many more to come.
Love and wishes, very true,
Little Tulip Girl brings you!"



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